

## HOW WE CAN HELP AFRICA

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 10, 2005*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, the plight of Sub-Saharan Africa is one that has concerned our country for some time now. Africa faces many challenges that potentially threaten long-term stability, including the world's most serious HIV/AIDS pandemic, widespread rural and urban poverty, and civil and ethnic conflict. In constant dollar terms, incomes in Africa are only about \$100 higher than in 1960.

With so many problems facing the continent, many Americans may wonder what they themselves can do to help. This question was addressed in a recent news release from Julius E. Coles, President of Africare. Africare is the oldest and largest African-American organization dedicated to African development. While his organization oversees the distribution of millions of dollars to projects across Africa, Mr. Coles has offered in this release some simple steps that average Americans can take in the effort to help Africa. In short, he advocates that Americans get to know Africa—its history, people, food, languages, music, and current events.

In so doing they will be gaining the knowledge and understanding necessary to advocate effectively for Africa to their elected officials. With large African communities in most cities, Americans have ample opportunity to get to know Africa without even leaving home. Americans should also begin to invest in companies and ventures that engage in sustainable and mutually beneficial investment in Africa, or take the extra step to buy products made in Africa.

In addition, Americans should remember to donate to reputable charity and nonprofit organizations that operate in Africa. As governmental capacity in most African nations is lacking, the non-profit sector serves an important role in providing assistance to those in need. Again I thank Mr. Coles for his release, it clearly reminds us that we all can help Africa, we need only take the first simple step.

[From Africare, Feb. 25, 2005]

## 10 WAYS YOU CAN HELP AFRICA

(By Julius E. Coles)

WASHINGTON, DC.—I have worked with Africa for nearly 40 years; and as a result, I am often approached by people here in the United States who want to help the people of Africa but who also feel overwhelmed. It may be the continent's vast size that intimidates, or the depth of some of its challenges, or the media reports that highlight Africa's problems but minimize the progress that has been made. "Can I really make a difference?" people ask. "Yes," I always tell them, "you can."

As I write these words, Black History Month is nearing its end. We have celebrated the achievements of our African-American community and honored our hereditary roots in Africa. Now, I propose that we Americans continue the celebration by committing ourselves to help Africa year-round. What follows are 10 ways in which you—an individual, a family, a member of a social or civic group, a small business, a church, a school—can do just that.

Read. The more you know about Africa, the better you can motivate others to help. Read a survey of African history since the

dawn of humankind more than 200,000 years ago. Read a book about black African leaders, from the Kushite pharaohs of ancient Egypt to the giants of 20th century independence (Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Leopold Senghor of Senegal, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and more). Follow African current events on Web sites like AllAfrica ([allafrica.com](http://allafrica.com)), BBC News ([newsbbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa](http://newsbbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa)) and CNN ([www.cnn.com/WORLD/africa/archive](http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/africa/archive)).

Teach, learn. If you're a teacher, plan a lesson or special project about Africa. If you're a parent, look for a fun "African experience" your family can share. If you're a student, do a research paper on Africa or start an Africa Club with your friends. If your school has African students, have a special assembly and ask them to speak.

Write. Voice your views and perspectives on Africa-related issues. Write a letter to your senator, member of congress, or state or local government official. Share your concerns with companies engaged in Africa. Author a guest editorial for your community or school newspaper, or a posting to your favorite Internet message board.

Speak. If you've traveled or worked in Africa, give a talk to a group you belong to. If you've never been to Africa, arrange for an African immigrant who lives in your community to speak.

Travel. If you have the means, visit Africa. Consider a group trip: traveling in groups can add to the fun as well as reduce the costs (group discounts are often substantial); As much as possible, do business with African vendors for transport, lodging and tours. While in Africa, absorb the beautiful scenery and cultural sites—but also take the time to meet local people, learn about their lives and understand the development challenges that they face. Finally, stay connected, and committed, once you return home. For example, if you visited a drought-prone country, involve your friends in raising funds for water wells.

See, hear, eat . . . enjoy! African culture is accessible in most American cities. You can see an African film (Africane-sur-Seine, The Gods Must Be Crazy) or a film about Africa (Hotel Rwanda, The Lost Boys of the Sudan, Cry Freedom). Attend a performance of African music or dance. Visit an African art museum. Eat at an African restaurant. Enjoy and appreciate the incredible variety of cultures that are "African" and share those enthusiasms with others.

Meet. Almost every city and many smaller communities in the United States are home to first-generation Africans. Find opportunities to meet your African neighbors, to learn from them and to invite their participation in local organizations. Reach out especially to new arrivals, who might welcome your help finding housing and jobs and generally adjusting to American life.

Invest. You may be in a position to invest in an African business or to join a group of investors with African interests (there are growing numbers of African investment funds you might want to explore). On the other hand, even the simple act of buying African art in an American store helps to support the artists and their families in Africa. Depending on where you work, you might also engage your employer in African investment or trade.

Donate. Make a charitable donation to one of the many reputable organizations assisting Africa. Your gift may be large or small. Usually you can give online. You can support special projects or offer to help "where needed most" in Africa. You can give individually; you can organize a fund raiser; you can give in your workplace.

Share. Send this article to 10 people, and ask each to send it on to 10 more—and en-

courage all recipients to help Africa this year in one of the nine other ways presented above.

**HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA  
ON TIBETAN UPRISING DAY****HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 10, 2005*

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I request the attached copy of the annual statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama marking March 10, 2005 as the 46th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising of 1959 be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

On March 10, 1959, the people of the Tibetan capital of Lhasa surrounded the home of the Dalai Lama in a brave effort to protect him from the Peoples' Liberation Army's guns that were trained on his compound from across the river. These Tibetans refused to leave even after the Chinese artillery fire began falling. On March 17, 1959, the Dalai Lama fled into exile in a futile effort to protect them; thousands died during the Chinese assault on the city, and thousands more died as the PLA moved to suppress a nationwide uprising against their increasingly repressive occupation of Tibet.

Despite China's history of aggression and brutality, the Dalai Lama has worked for more than forty years to promote Tibetan self-determination through non-violent means. I am proud that the U.S. Congress is a beacon of support for the Tibetan struggle. As the lead sponsor of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, I was pleased to see the Congress come together recently in support of a strong U.S. policy on Tibet.

The Dalai Lama's release of his annual March 10 statement today highlights key points regarding for the Tibetan people and the world. Four decades of Chinese-led economic and social changes in Tibet have not primarily benefitted the Tibetan people. There continues to be instability in Tibet not because of "splittist activities", but because of a profound lack of human rights, religious freedom and self-rule on the ground in Tibet. China itself has made tremendous economic progress during the past twenty or thirty years, but China's image in the world remains tarnished by her human rights records, undemocratic actions, the lack of the rule of law and the unequal implementation of autonomy rights regarding minorities. The renewed contact between the Tibetan and Chinese leadership, including the third round of meetings last September, are resulting in gradually improving interactions. It is my hope the future will continue to see improvements in the dialog.

**THE STATEMENT OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA ON THE 46TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TIBETAN NATIONAL UPRISING DAY**

On the occasion of the 46th anniversary of the Tibetan People's Uprising, I convey my warm greetings to my fellow Tibetans in Tibet and in exile and to our friends around the world.

During these more than four decades great changes have taken place in Tibet. There has been a great deal of economic progress along with development in infrastructure. The Golmud-Lhasa railway link that is being built is a case in point. However, during the